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RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 2585
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO IMMEDIATE 0308
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA IMMEDIATE 0322
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 0839
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE 0673
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU IMMEDIATE 0314
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 0489
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
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RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE IMMEDIATE 2980
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 2365
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE IMMEDIATE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BISHKEK 000715

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/CEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/10/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [KG](#)

SUBJECT: FORMER DEPUTY DEFENSE MINISTER ORUZBAYEV ON
KYRGYZSTAN

REF: IIR 6 955 0204 08

Classified By: Ambassador Marie L. Yovanovitch, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Summary. The Ambassador recently met with former Deputy Defense Minister Oruzbayev, who confirmed that his forced resignation was due to his chairmanship of the government commission established to review the proposed parking ramp project at the Manas Air Force Base. He also provided a hard-hitting critique of the Kyrgyz administration, including the personnel policy of hiring trusted southerners, and noted that there is widespread concern about possible, unpredictable unrest in the fall, as happened in 2004/2005 before former President Akayev's ouster. He also said the Manas Air Force Base was secure for now, because both Russia and China recognize the problems in Afghanistan, do not want to handle the task themselves, and, therefore, have not insisted that the base be closed. End Summary.

FROM PROMOTION TO FORCED RESIGNATION

12. (C) The Ambassador recently met with former First Deputy Defense Minister Kubanychbek Oruzbayev, who confirmed that his forced retirement (reftel) was due to his chairmanship of the government commission established to review the proposed parking ramp project at the Manas Air Force Base. He said that events moved very quickly. On May 15, his name was on a promotion list to receive a second star, and on May 17, that GKNB Chairman Sutalinov had signed a two page letter charging Oruzbayev with lobbying the interests of the United States, particularly with regard to the ramp at the Manas Air Force Base. By May 18, he was being warned by friends at the Kyrgyz White House that "something was going on," and on May 20, the President's decree informing of Oruzbayev's resignation was issued. Oruzbayev noted that, in fact, he had advocated for the ramp, but because it was in

Kyrgyzstan's interests.

HARSH CRITIQUE OF GOVERNMENT

13. (C) Oruzbayev said the decision to fire him over the ramp issue was a "comedy" that showed there was no analysis going into Kyrgyz decision-making. In part, he said, this was due to the fact that "incompetent" people are being named to key positions. The main criteria now for appointment to government is which region you are from and whether you are a trusted insider. New Defense Minister Kalyev, he noted, is very close to President Bakiyev. He added that more personnel changes will come in August and September. Oruzbayev noted that, from the President's point of view, he believes he is doing the right thing by appointing people he knows, but this is not a well thought-through strategy. With 80% of appointees coming from the south, it is neither a fair nor a realistic personnel policy, and it leads to north-south divisions.

14. (C) Looking at the bigger picture, Oruzbayev said that the main motivation in the government right now is fear. The economic situation is bad and getting worse. Corruption is huge and at the root of many problems. Economic decisions are based on the interests of a very few. The courts are terrible. The President, he concluded, has no strategic vision of the future. The leadership is ineffective, and all decisions are made with the view to preserving power. This makes "the man with the gun" -- the defense and security

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services -- the key players in Kyrgyzstan's political drama and explains Kalyev's appointment.

CONCERN ABOUT UNREST IN THE FALL

15. (C) He noted that there is widespread concern that unrest is possible in the fall, not led by the opposition, but spontaneous expressions of discontent by ordinary citizens. This is what happened in 2004/2005 and is very unpredictable. Concern about demonstrations in the fall explains why the government is so suspicious of the U.S. and why it cannot take action on seemingly obvious issues.

MANAS AFB SECURE -- FOR NOW

16. (C) Asked about the future of the base, Oruzbayev said the base would stay -- because both Russia and China recognize the problems in Afghanistan, do not want to handle the task themselves, and, therefore, have not insisted that the base be closed down. If Russia really pushed, claimed Oruzbayev, the base would be out. He said the U.S. should expect more of the same kind of Russian "tricky actions" periodically, i.e. untrue internet stories, "crazy" people leading demonstrations against the base, but that none of this is serious.

COMMENT

17. (C) According to Oruzbayev, the year 2005 was characterized by hope, while the current year is characterized by fear. We have heard from many others that the fall could be a hot political season and that President Bakiyev is preparing by putting trusted lieutenants in place. Ever calm, Oruzbayev assured the Ambassador that the bleak picture he painted of Kyrgyzstan was not a "tragedy," rather it was the expected travails of a country in transition. "Kyrgyzstan has everything it needs to succeed," he concluded.

18. (C) In our assessment, Oruzbayev's brutal assessment of the government he just left is only partly shaped by sour

grapes. His comments track with previous remarks he has made to us and with those of others who are still in government or are active observers.

YOVANOVITCH